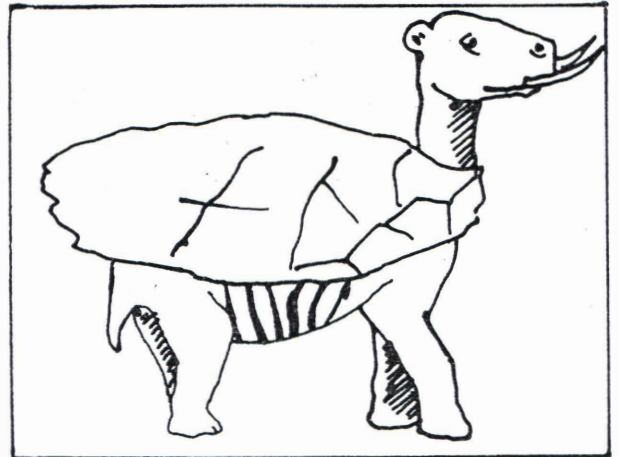


This is Bilk # 65, May 1995. Bilk is published by Ulrich Magin - Fribolinstraße 5 - D-74321 Bietigheim-Bissingen - Germany. Subscriptions cost DM 15 for Europe and DM 20 for the rest of the world. Please send bank notes, because cashing cheques from the US is time-consuming, also, the bank keeps more than half the sum for itself. The cover illustration does not show a sea serpent, but two motorways that cross at Bilk - a Düsseldorf quarter which has the same name as this newsletter.

#### Behemoth

● Sachsenheim: This small town close to Bietigheim, where I live, was the place of a remarkable discovery earlier this year. As shown in the sketch to the right, the "skeletal remains of an amphibian" were discovered at Hohenhaslach Lake. During mud removal operations, the "prehistoric amphibian" - better, the bones of it - were exposed and brought to Sachsenheim City Hall. Reconstructions show they come from a "long ago extinct and yet unknown animal species". Sachsenheim officer for environment problems, Alois Danner, told the press the animal had had a shell like a tortoise, four pillar-like short legs which enabled it to move on land as well as in water and two tusks. According to my source, several experts were already on their way to Sachsenheim to analyse the "sensational discovery". As a look to the photo shows, the creature is actually a mixture of photos of an elephant, a camel and a tortoise, and my source is the "Bietigheimer Zeitung" for April 1st, 1995, p. 12 - it was a hoax, this time with a lake monster. As obvious as this one is, other April-Foo's-Day-hoaxes, like the so-called "surgeon's photo" of the Loch Ness monster, have enjoyed a far better life.



● Bibliography: A strange flying thing-beast photographed at Loch Ness in the summer of 1992, see Fortean Times 79, p. 54 (normal bird - time exposed?) -- Sammy, the cayman which caused a mild panic last summer when it escaped from its owner Jörg Zars and spent a week in a bathing lake near Neuss lives now -cared for and in orderly condition- in a small zoo in Saxony. Such was the impact of the event that newspaper continue to regularly report on the health and whereabouts of the escaped pet. (Ludwigsburger Kreiszeitung, 31 March 95, p. 18; Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 31 March 95, p.11)

#### Isis

● The "Noticias del mundo" is the Spanish version of the Weekly World News. Among its reports - or hoaxes - is one about "the siren in the bathtub". A neß-agency report on Noticias del mundo: see Stuttgarter Zeitung, Feb 25, 95, p. 102

#### Leviathan

● The Russian sea serpent, which I have referred to last Bilk, is described with more detail and shown in a photograph in Fortean Times 79, p.9. It was washed ashore at Cape Nemetsky after a storm on October 24, 1994. It was described as 37 ft long and covered with fur or feathers. Actually, it was a dead sperm whale.

#### MARINE LIFE

● Whales: A 3m/10 ft young whale died at the western Turkish coastal town Izmir. It must have swum nearly 1600 kilometres to get there, my source (Die Rheinpfalz, 14 Feb 95) says. Cause of death were harpoon wounds. - Within a few weeks in February 1995, two whales were washed ashore at the German North Sea coast. The second was a 6m/20 ft pilot whale stranded at Wyk on Föhr Island. (Frankfurter Rundschau, 25 Feb, p. 26, Stuttgarter Zeitung 25 Feb, p. 24) -- Dolphins, which have always been regarded as peaceful and kind creatures, are actually killers. According to a report in the Welt (11 March 95), observations by biologists have shown that the dolphin population in the Moray Firth, Scotland, kill porpoises.

● Shark: A 7m/13 ft basking shark, weighing 2 tonnes, was caught by fishermen south of the French island Corsica in the Mediterranean Sea. The fish was publicly exhibited in Propriano near Ajaccio on February 22 before it could be destroyed. (Die Rheinpfalz 24 Feb 95)

## CRYPTOZOOLOGY AND DISCOVERIES

- A British expedition is searching for the Orang Pendek, the fabulous mythical ape of Sumatra. Expedition leader Debbie Martyr has herself seen the 75cm/2.5 ft creature three times and also discovered footprints of it in Kerinci Sadlat national park. (taz, Berlin, 7 March 95, p.20)
- A so-called "rabbit cangaroo" (Kaninchenkänguruh in German) has been rediscovered (in Australia?). Biologists had previously believed that the species had been extinct for 125 years. (Bietigheimer Zeitung, 28 Feb 95, p.7; Stuttgarter Zeitung, 28 Feb, p. 12; Geo, March 95)
- A German iguana enthusiast, Gunther Köhler, has discovered two new species of black iguana, raising the number of species known to 12. One of the newly discovered animals, *Ctenosaura flavidorsalis*, has a bright yellow back and lives around La Paz, Honduras. The second species, *Ctenosaura alfredschmidti*, was found in the southern Mexican state Campeche. Black iguanas are characterised by their thick and thorny tail with which they block the entrance to their caves. Both species are small, about the size of a lower arm. (Stadtanzeiger Bietigheim-Bissingen, March 9, 95, p.13)
- A French expedition has discovered a "stone age people" in New Guinea. Such reports seem to come one a month, so I don't know what this one is worth. Expedition leader Patrice Franceschi declared in July 1994 in Paris the primitive people lived in a village in the western part of the island, which belongs to Indonesia. It is in a highland, a forested region, and the people, who lived as stone age-hunters spoke an unknown language. The put bones through their noses. Papuas accompanying the expeditions were unable to communicate with the new found tribe and could understand only two words. (Die Rheinpfalz, 22 July 1994).

## ARCHAEOLOGY

- Rungholt: This is a legendary Atlantis-type town which was destroyed during floods in the Middle Ages. Now Hans Peter Duerr claims to have discovered the ruins, but archaeologists say his finds are worthless. Lots of discussion about all this in the German papers, including stories in the Zeit newspaper, I only noted one source, the German news magazine Der Spiegel, Nov 30, 94.
- Atlantis: The "Frankfurter Allgemeine Magazin" for March 3, 1995, had a very good article on the Atlantis myth, mentioning every aspect of the tale from folklore to films and novels, occult speculation and fascist occultism, who regarded Atlantis as the original home of the "white race".
- Lake Constance: While excavating a prehistoric lake settlement in Lake Constance at Sipplingen, divers found remains of wall paintings with fields of dots and other ornaments. As archaeologist Helmut Schlichtherle explained, this is evidence for temples or cult rooms of the settlements, dating to 3900 - 3800 BC. (Filder-Zeitung, 23. March 1994).

## A STRANGE LAKE

Early in February, the Eichener See, or Lake of Eichen, appeared once more. This is a fabulous lake near Schopfheim at the southern rim of the German Black Forest. This year, the lake was 250 m long, 140 m wide and up to 3 m deep. It fills a hollow above Eichen which is almost always dry and is used by farmers as a field for agriculture throughout the year. Only very sporadically, sometimes once in several years, the hollow fills with water, but it is not fed by a stream. About 40 m below the hollow is a layer of clay which stops water from sinking deeper. Now, after snow melts and heavy rainfalls, the water below ground will be too much and it fills the hollow, in that way creating the mysterious lake. The pressure is so high it forces the water through a semi-solid layer of chalkstone. The water then comes up right between the leaves of grass and out of mouse-holes. This year's Eichener See is said to be its largest appearance for years. (Reports with photos, see Bietigheimer Zeitung, Feb 11, 95, p. 22; Stuttgarter Zeitung Feb 11, 95, p.8).

This ends this Bilk, the next will appear in July. There was little of aquatic crypto-zoology this issue, most of the fortetana being reported at the moment are the multitude of weeping and bleeding statues of St Mary found all over Italy. I hope next Bilk will have more traditional Bilk-material. Keep your eyes open when you look at the sea or lakes and have your camera ready. And, as always, your news and views are most welcome. Ulrich.

